

Message Text

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PAGE 01 GENEVA 09863 291201Z
ACTION HA-05

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: UNHCR
SUBJECT: PROJECTED ENLARGEMENT OF UNHCR EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE

1. IN CHANCE SOCIAL CONVERSATION JUNE 28, MISOFF LEARNED THAT A MOVE IS UNDERWAY TO ENLARGE THE CURRENT 31-MEMBER UNHCR EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE. MISOFF WAS TOLD BY NETHERLANDS MISSION FIRST SECRETARY VAN NOUHUYS, WHO IS DUTCH WORKING CONTACT WITH UNHCR, THAT HE AND SWEDISH MISSION OFFICER ARE CURRENTLY CONSULTING TO PREPARE WORKING PROPOSAL TO ENLARGE EXCOMM. THEY PLAN TO CALL SESSION OF PRINCIPAL EXCOMM MEMBERS NEXT WEEK TO DISCUSS PROJECT IN LARGER CONTEXT.

2. INITIATIVE FOR THIS MOVEMENT, ACCORDING TO VAN NOUHUYS, CAME FROM HIGH COMMISSIONER HARTLING, WHO SAID HE WAS UNDER PRESSURE FROM THIRD WORLD NATIONS, PRINCIPALLY AFRICAN, TO INCREASE THEIR REPRESENTATION ON EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE. AT PRESENT TIME, TWELVE THIRD WORLD MEMBERS, OF WHICH SIX (ALGERIA, MADAGASCAR, NIGERIA, UGANDA, TANZANIA, AND TUNISIA) ARE AFRICAN, ARE REPRESENTED ON THE COMMITTEE.

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PAGE 02 GENEVA 09863 291201Z

HARTLING'S THINKING, ACCORDING TO VAN NOUHUYS, WAS THAT IT WOULD BE PREFERABLE TO MEET THIS PROBLEM IN A STRUCTURED MANNER AND PLAN FOR A SUITABLE INCREASE IN THE EXCOMM AFTER DUE DELIBERATION, RATHER THAN PERMIT THE SITUATION TO EVOLVE UNATTENDED AND RISK IT GETTING OUT OF HAND. ACCORDINGLY, HE APPROACHED THE DUTCH TO SEE IF THEY MIGHT NOT BE HELPFUL IN ORGANIZING PRESENT EXCOMM MEMBERS

TOWARD AGREEMENT FOR APPROPRIATE ENLARGEMENT OF THAT BODY.
AFTER CONSULTATIONS WITH THE HAGUE (AMBASSADOR VAN DER
KLAUW), THE DUTCH MISSION HERE AGREED TO COOPERATE AND,
AS NOTED ABOVE, ASKED THE SWEDES TO ASSIST IN PREPARING
A WORKING PAPER.

3. INITIAL THINKING ON THE PART OF THE DUTCH AND THE
SWEDES IS TO INCREASE THE 31-MEMBER BODY BY FIVE. HOW-
EVER, VAN NOUHUYS STATED THAT THERE IS SOME FEELING
(POSSIBLY ON THE PART OF UNHCR) THAT THIS WOULD NOT BE
ADEQUATE IN TERMS OF THIRD WORLD REQUIREMENTS, AND THAT
MEMBERSHIP MIGHT HAVE TO BE EXPANDED TO 40. IN ANY EVENT,
THIS WILL BE A PRIME TOPIC FOR NEXT WEEK'S ENLARGED DIS-
CUSSION OF THE MATTER, TO WHICH THE UNITED STATES WILL BE
INVITED.

4. THE SCENARIO, AS DESCRIBED BY VAN NOUHUYS, WOULD BE
FOR THE PROPOSAL TO BE PRESENTED TO ECOSOC DURING ITS
SUMMER SESSION HERE, AFTER WHICH, ASSUMING APPROVAL,
IT WOULD BE FORWARDED TO THE FALL UNGA FOR CONSIDERATION
AND APPROVAL. THE PROJECT WOULD THEN BE FORMALLY ADOPTED
BY ECOSOC AT ITS SESSION NEXT YEAR.

5. DEPARTMENT IS REQUESTED TO CONSIDER THIS MATTER ON AN
URGENT BASIS AND PROVIDE GUIDANCE TO THE MISSION FOR
NEXT WEEK'S MEETING.
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PAGE 03 GENEVA 09863 291201Z

6. COMMENT: AS DEPARTMENT WELL AWARE, THIS IS PROPOSAL
WHICH HAS BEEN RAISED IN PAST FROM TIME TO TIME. HOW-
EVER, IT WOULD APPEAR THAT IT IS NOW SHAPING UP IN MORE
SPECIFIC AND PURPOSEFUL FORM. WE UNDERSTAND THAT U.S.
POSITION ON ISSUE HERETOFORE HAS BEEN THAT ENLARGING
EXCOMM BEYOND ITS PRESENT SIZE WOULD RISK MAKING THAT
BODY UNWIELDY, LESS RESPONSIVE TO REQUIREMENTS OF ITS
INTERESTED MEMBERSHIP, AND MORE POLITICALLY ORIENTED.
END COMMENT.
VANDEN HEUVEL

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